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DECLASSIFIED POL 14 VIETS

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Action

CONFIDENTIAL

VZ CZ CM JA 863 JIA 753

EA PP RUEHC

DE RUMJIR 25025 1281420

Info ZNY CCCCC

P R 081400Z MAY 67

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1967 MAY 8 AM 10 32

SS FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

GPM TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY

SP INFO RUMTBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

SC RUHHHYA/CINCPAC

SAH RUMJFS/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

L STATE GRNC

H BT

P C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 25025

NSC CINCPAC FOR POLAD

INR SUB: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY: MAY 8 MORNING SESSION

RSR REF: STATE 189442

1. BY VOTE OF 44 OUT OF 78 PRESENT CA ADOPTED COMMITTEE VERSION ARTICLE 24 OF DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION LAW. THUS, AS THINGS STAND NOW, THERE WILL BE SINGLE ELECTION

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FOR PRESIDENT WITH NO PROVISION FOR MINIMUM PERCENTAGE OR RUN-OFF. VALIDITY OF CA VOTE HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN CHALLENGED BY NUMBER OF DEPUTIES AND THEY MAY PRESS FOR REOPENING DEBATE ON ARTICLE 24 AT SOME FUTURE SESSION.

2. TWO HOUR DEBATE PRECEEDING VOTE WAS BITTER. GVN CASE FOR SINGLE ELECTION ARGUED BY SOME OF ITS MOST ELEQUENT SPOKESMEN IN CA (NGUYEN HUU THONG, NGUYEN VAN HOI). LY QUI CHUNG, PHAN QUANG DAN AND NGUYEN VAN NGAI REITERATED CASE FOR RUN-OFF. NGUYEN HUU CHUNG POINTED OUT THAT IF PRINCIPLE OF SINGLE ELECTION ACCEPTED, CONCEIVABLE THAT EVEN WINNER MAY RECEIVE LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF POPULAR VOTE, IN WHICH CASE ACCORDING ARTICLE 21 HE WILL HAVE TO FORFEIT DEPOSIT AND REIMBURSE GVN FOR CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES ON HIS BEHALF.

3. ONCE VOTE TAKEN, SOUTHERN RENAISSANCE DEPUTIES WALKED OUT IN PROTEST. NUMBER OF OTHER DEPUTIES CHALLENGED VALIDITY OF VOTE ARGUING THAT DEPUTIES

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Dora Izenberg DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
IS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXCISED MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
EXEMPTIONS

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NEVER HAD OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE ON VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES OPEN TO THEM. CA CHAIRMAN SUU ALLOWED DEBATE TO RESUME FOR ABOUT HALF AN HOUR OVER OBJECTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC-ALLIANCE LEADER LE PHUOC SANG WHO MAINTAINED THAT CASE OF ARTICLE 24 NOW CLOSED. D
. DANG VAN SUNG SPOKE OUT AGAIN IN FAVOR OF RUN-OFFWM SUNG SAID HE WANTED TO GO ON RECORD AS HAVING BEEN AGAINST ARTICLE 24 AND WOULD SUPPORT ANY DIRECTORATE EFFORT TO AMEND IT. FORMER CA VICE-CHAIRMAN LE QUANG LIEM ACCUSED ELECTORAL LAW DRAFTING COMMITTEE OF WRITING LAW WITH "INTERESTS OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS AND NOT THE NATION IN MIND".

4. SUU FINELLY DECIDED TO ADJOURN SESSION. JUST BEFORE DOING SO, HE TOLD CA THAT THOSE WHO VOTED FOR ARTICLE 24 WILL "BEAR RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE HISTORY".

5. AT BEGINNING OF MAY 8 AFTERNOON SESSION, CA VOTED TO POSTPONE FURTHER DISCUSSION OF ARTICLE 24

PAGE 4/ 47.'84 25#25 C O N F D E N T I A L
UNTIL AFTER REMAINING ARTICLES HAVE BEEN DEBATED. POSSIBILITY THEREFORE EXISTS THAT ARTICLE WILL BE AMENDED BEFOR
E CA VOTES FINAL APPROVAL OF ELECTORAL LAW.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH TIME WAS SHORT, EMBASSY WAS ABLE THROUGH VARIOUS MEANS CONVEY TO SEVERAL KEY DEPUTIES IMPORTANCE OF ISSUE. AS HAS BEEN EVIDENT THROUGHOUT DEBATE, GVN CONSIDERS SINGLE ELECTION OFFERS BEST CHANCE FOR GOVERNMENT CANDIDATE AND THUS GVN SUPPORTERS ARE DETERMINED FORCE IT THROUGH. AS REPORTED EARLIER, AMBASSADOR RAISED SUBJECT WITH LY APRIL 28 WHO REMARKED THAT DECISION RESTS WITH ASSEMBLY.

GP-3. BUNKER

ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O 5/8/67, 10:52 A.M.
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA 5/8/67, 10:52 A.M.

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